

## [Sam James Washington]

1

[?] and customs - Occupational [?]

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Rangelore.

Tarrant Co., Dist./ #7 [127?]

Page. #1

FC 240

Sam James Washington, 88, living at 3520 Columbus Ave, Fort Worth, Texas was born a slave to [Sam?] Young in 1849.

Young owned a plantation and also a cattle ranch located in [Wharton?] Co, Texas. At the age of 15 Washington was placed on the ranch to work as a cowhand. He continued his career to the [range?] until he was [55?] years old

The story of his range life follows:

"Yas ser, boss dis old nigger puts in 20 yeahs wo'king wid de critters, way back yonder befo' [surrundah?].

"les bo'n fo' Marster Sam Young on de plantation det him have in [norh?] Wharton, Texas, [ther?] les stayed till 15 yeahs old den da Marster puts me on de ranch dat him have on de Colorado River. Dat am de yeah befo' surrundah and aftah surrundah les stayed right ther

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wid de Marster fo' a long spell. W'en les quit de Marster I went to wo'k fo' Shenghi Pierce fo' short spell. Dis [sullud?] person am den 35 yeahs old an' '[cides?] to go farming.

“W'en lse am on de range dat am de days dat de cowhand am what am a cowhand. [Sucks?], lse see [?] cowhand dat come to da Fort Worth stockyards wid critters loaded in de truck. Dey have de big hat slouched on ther head, high heel foot gear an's bendans 'round de neck an' dey sez lse a cowboy. If one of de old cowhands could meet up wid sich greeners deh would sure laugh demself plumb into misery. C 12 - 2/[11?]/[?] [??]

“Say sar, in de old days de cowhand have to shoot straight an' quick, or get shoted. De have to ride 'em rough or get his neck busted.

“Marster Young's brand am 'SJ' and run lots of critters 2 long de Colorado River. Thar whar 15 [waodies?] on de ranch. All of dem white boys 'cept three of weuns cullud fellows. 'Twas me [Joe?] Young and Jim and all of weuns am raized on de Marster's place

“De reason why [do?]'de Marster puts me on de range am 'cause lse a good rider and aftah lse on ranch fo' couple of yeahs de cock-s-dodde makes me de [beed?] boss warngler.

“W'en dis cullud boy claps dis pair of loop legs 'round a critter 'twarnt any use fo' dat oily [cayuso?] to try fo' to get out f'om undeh me. Dey jus' aint done it. At de furett les use de saddle, but 'twarnt long till I don't wants de tree. No ser, de dare back is de way les takes 'em. Dem critters could go fo'ward, backward, upward, sideways an' all de ways at once, but Loopleg, [deis?] what de boys calls me, would stay looped.

“De hands on de 'S[?]' wher always ready to put up de jack on dat dis nigger could stay looped on any hoss dat am fetched to de outfit. Dis old Loopleg made some jeck fo' de cowhands dat a-way. 'Twas [man?] times dat rawhides f'om tuddr places would fetch a [snak?]-blood hoss an' sez, "[benhs?] one det Loopleg can't stay wid an' weuns got de jack dat sez so”. Dat setted it right den an' ther, 'twarnt any different made '[cut?] what les sez,

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deys don't even ask me, but starts putting up de jacks an' les [have?] to ride 'em. W'en les sez, ride 'em dat em what Loopleg does.

"Ther am one time dat a hoss am fetched dat caused dis cullud person to turn w'te do' a spell. les knowed de boys bad bet lots of jack en' les in some money too, so les sur wents to ride det critter an' de critter wants me not to ride. After de bets em all [mede?] les pills on en' den action started. All de rawhides am a-sitting on de 3 "[???] [??] yelling," give 'em the [?] [uck?], give 'em de hawgroll, break oat nigger's [loo?], while my crowd am yelling, "Stay wid 'em Loopleg, hold det loop black boy, stay in dat rocker. But, dat hoss sure wernt a rocker. Noseer, him em de pitcheness hoss wid de mostest wiggles lse ever looped. De jus' stays a-pitc in' an' a-pitchin'. 'Twernt any danger dat de critter would pitch me off, but les getting plumb tuckered holdin' my loop. les [ses?] to dat hoss, "[hoss?] yous betteh stop 'cause les wants some suppeh". les sure am getting tuckered, but pretty soon de critter starts to slow down, den les starts fanning de hoss's ears wid my hat, 'cause den les knows les had him bested.

"[?] de hoss settles down my nose am spilling blood. Dat critter could it de ground harder dan any hoss les ever saw. les would [?] den come down to its back bowed an' all de four feet together an' stiff as a post. Lawdy, Lawdy, de stars det ais nigger saw am plenty. It 'twernt dat les [?] jack bet les sure would have been be tea by dat hoss.

"De next place [?] les have to do ridin' [?] w'en de critters go on a stomp. Den 'twas always Loopleg in de lead to turn de critters. Tis sure de last ride if yous takes a spill while in de lead of a stomp.

"De worstest time fo' de stomp am in a buster an' dem dis [?] pleg has seem pleny. De worstest les see am once on 4 de old '[?]J'.

"[lostest?] of de time weuns could tell w'en a stomp am gwins to take place f'om a buster. [?] befo'e bad storm hits dat de critters gets techy an' de hoss gets to fustin'. [?] am one hoss in my string dat sure would tell yous dat a hard spell of weather am a-coming. Dat

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hoss would paw de ground, shake de herd,s itch de tail and yous could feel de muscles quiver. Iffde signs 'peers [?] spell of wheather am on de way, 'twernt need to fuss about it, jus' sez." Well, a good buster am a-coming so set fo' it.

'[?] once in de late wintah en' les night riding w'on Peg, dets da hoss's name, starts to give de sign an' de critters had rized to ther feet. les can't see 'cause 'twas derk as dis cullud person am black. les could herd de horns bumping gwine clash, clash an' de critters doin' de snort. "Tis a-coming les sez' to myself 'bettah call de crew'. I hits fo' de bunkhouse an' told [?], de cock-a-dodle, "bettah call ridin' [?] 'cause a buster am due pronto 'ccord'n' to Peg's sign".

"I hits back fo' de herd en' jined [?] and, [?] [?] wid me dat night, en' we starts singin' to de critters. les 'membehs all what les sing det night. [?] dis one: "[?] de hawg an' kill de cat an' double de [?] of rough on rats Swing de cow an' now de calf now yous partner once an' half Pull [?] yous shoes an' smell yous socks an' grab yous heifer an' rattle yous [?]"

"De critters keeps a stirin', but nothing starts till aftah de tudders hands em on de line an' day am a-singin' to be babies. 5 [?] can be [?] fo' mo'e dan a mile. Everything am gwine pretty t'll all a sudden, "BOOM", clash comes de thunder en' it hits close by an' it knocked me loco fo'e few seconds. [?]'en dat clash hit de critters lit out lak deys have to be some place pronto. De watch an' sky-fire comes wid de thunder, so everything de [?] started at the same time an' my hoss Peg too.

"Peg em de/ hoss dat had de knlolwde of de cow wok woik lek dis nigger. [?] knows jus' what to do so '[?] nt herd to get de hoss wher tis wented, dat am et de head in as lead of de critters fo' to turn dem.

[?] hoss sure wo'ked pretty [?] night. He stayed right side of de lead critters an' keeps crowdin', crowdin' fo' to force dem over. Shucks, les can't drive em so good lak he am a-doin', 'cause [le?] can't see whar to go, so les leave it to Peg. All les do am sit a shoot in f'ont of the animals an' de tudders am a-doin' de same. Wid 15 rawhides a whooping an'

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a shooting 'twas enough to drive most critters into hell, but dat night dem devils em plumb loco an' keeps a-gine. De [?] would slack up a little an' [?] would make a little headway, den ["Bang"?], de thunder an' sky-fire would [?] en' away de critters would go.

"Dat buster don't stop till jus' befo' daylight an' den de critters am plumb tuckered out. It [?] at hell of de critters am gone. Det buster made [?] of animals fo' twelve [?] long de river.

"Afteh a stom whar thar em a scatterment tis a job fo' to hunt de strays an' afteh dat [?] weuns whar over a week 6 dreggin' over de range huntin' fo' dem. Den 'twas only twice a day dat weuns get to de [?], 'twas in de mo'nin' befo' weuns [?] en' [?] w'en weuns [?] in. [Betwix?] dat time weuns [?] on a piece of jerk to keep de tape worm f'om yellin'. Yes ser, weuns puts a chunk of [? ?] canteen of [?] in de saddle beg en' hit it out fo' de day. Ther em no [dener?] fo' to [?] stomach misery 'cause of eatin' too fast w'en yous eat jerk. Yous must jus' naturally take it slow, lak eating taffy [?]. At furst [?] much fo' to tast, but as tis [?] de taste comes an' tis good too. Some of de time de jerk em so hard [?] have to cutt off a chunk win de knife. Aftah a dey rid jus' jerk de nose-[?] looks mighty good en' weuns sure would dig into de whistle-berries an' broiled stock dat am cut off a fat yeerlin' [?], as cooky, sure knows how to fix it. De cowhands always called de cook [?]-cheater, but old [?] never cheated weuns belly. No ser, weuns gets meat and whistle-berries a-plenty. [?] weuns gets tucked out on [?] beef weuns would go en' shoot some game, sich as deer, antelope, turkey an' other sich fo' [?]. 'Twernt any truble to get de game [?] 'cause 'twas full of it long de river bottom.

"[?] yous am [?]' id de cowhands fillin' yous flue an' someone sez, "[?] de lick dis wey", What would [ous?] shoot?. [?], tis molassas. De [gravey?] em called sop, biscuits em called sinkers, light bread am called gun woodin'. Dat am de way de cowhand talk. De sez, "shoot de [?] [waddin?]' fo' sop up my lick".

"'Twas lost of herd wo'k en' 'twas lots of fun. [D'en?] 7 wo'k am slack de boys am doin' somethin' all de time to 'muse demselves. De am shootin', or loopin', or ridin' 'gainst each

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tudder. In de [?] racin' am wher old Loopleg shined. My hoss Peg could kick dirt in de face of mostest of de tudder josses in all dat section of de country. Waddies sometimes come f'om tudder outfits en' ses days have a fast hoss. Well, Loopleg an' Peg would always show dem up.

“Peg belonged to me. Marster Young gives me de hoss w'en he gives me my freedom an' dat am de best thin' dat dis cullud person ever owned an' weuns am pertners all de wile dat de hoss lived.

“On de 'SJ' ranch em some good loopers, but 'twas a fellow dat comes [?] fo' a short spell dat am called Booger Red. Gosh fo' mighty he makes all weuns on de 'SJ' look foolish. Hed would ses, “tel me wher yous want me to smear, which horn, leg or de tail”. Weuns would tell him en' sure enough ther em wher he put de loop. Once weuns ask him to smear de loop on de critters nose and thar am wher he put it wid de critter a-running.

“Marster Young could best all of weuns shootin'. He use to sez, “yous [?] lak a bunch of [greeners?]. See dat limb over younder”. Pintin' at a bush. “Well, put yous peepers on it”. Den 'twas bang, bang, bang jus' as fast as les ses it, en' off comes de limb. Wid a rabbit runnin' off 50 yards he could hit dem in de head every shoot wit' a six-gun. W'en pay day [?] owe up, den dat can get off all goes to town an' have a [?] of a time. “Wernt anyone hurt, [? ?] boys em full of fun. 'Course if someone gets pesterin' dem de boys den gets riled en' den dey don't take much pesterin' f'om anyone. 8 “I often goes wid dem, but dis cullud person always leeves de pizen fluid [alone?], 'cause Marster Young always 'vised me not to drink. I gets lots of joyment watchin' do tudder boys in ther foolishment.

“Boy wherin a pizen just one time w'en de bar boy em busy. De cowhands acts lak day em in a hurry en' shootin a hole in a barrle of whiskey en' catch de liquor in a hat en' t runs out. Dey catch m'ybe a quart den plugs de hole wid a stick. [Den?] dey passed de hat 'round fo' everybody to drink out of. W'en deys gets done Sandy [? ?] on de bar en' [?], “keep de change.” De bar man just laught en' ses, “thanks boys help youself”.

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"Jus' leave dem alone en' everythin' small right en' dey would lay down de jack fo' de damage. If yous tries to harm one 'twas lak doin' harm to all of dem. One time les come [?] pettin' in heap of truble en' 'twernt my fault. It [?] ['but?] dis way:

"Weuns all in town en' de [?] em too. les a settin' in f'ont of a pizen jint en' a whit man comes up to en' sez.:

"Whos yous belong to, nigger?"

"les Marster Young's nigger, les sez p'lite lak.

"Yous look lak a smart nigger. les don' lak smart niggers nohow en' les gwine to smak yous one". He sez.

"Gwine f'om me. Ise went no a'gument". Ise told him. "an' yous betteh not smak me".

"Dat fellow em tryin' to get dis nigger to do somethin' fo' to give him reason to shoot him a nigger. He [?] his hand on 9 his gun en' em stepin' towards me. les gettin' ready to smal him an' dat sure would been de fixin' of me. Den les hear someone talk en' sez:

"If yous move one inch mo'e Ise put daylight [?] rough yous". It am Marster Young talkin'. Him had come over wher les is.

"Who em yous?" de fellow sez.

"Makes no diffe'ence who Ise is an' les give yous jus' one minute to git gwine. Dat nigger was not out of his place."

"Dat fellow sees dat de Marster have no foolishment in his talk en' backs away.

"les never had 'perence wid de rustlers 'cause de Marster wont 'llows me to go wid de boys huntin' dem. les see de rustlers hangin' up to dry men times. Dat am what de

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cattlemen do wid de rustlers w'en de em catched wid cattle. Yes ser, jus' hang dem on a tree limb fo' to dry.

"What les lak to do em go on de drive. Many times les come through Fort Worth w'en weuns am gwine North wid a herd. [?] in Fort Worth les see de mostest cattle [?] les ever [?] to see in one bunch. In de Trinity River bottom one time les see the whole bottom full fo' far as les could see. Yous could look dis way en' dat way em' all dat could be sen em critters. It was 'cause of de diffe'ert hands meetin' [?].

"De furtherest les ever go em to de Red River. Ther de Marster have me gwine back to de ranch. 'Twas heyah or at de River Rived de Marster could jine wid some tudder herd en' him den don't need me.

"Twas in [?] 70's dat les jine a tudder outfit down in de 10 Gulf country. 'Twas de Shanghai Pierce outfit en' twas a awful big outfit. De wo'k em 'bout de same 'cept ther am mo'e sleepin' out in de open. Ther weuns have to use skunk bosts fo' to keep de skunks off of weuns at night. De get em a piece of canvas wid de four corners pulled together, and de skunks can't puts ther teet' into yous. If de skunk bits yous den you m'ybe goes loco. It am called hi-phobers (hydrophobia) en' dis cullud person sure don't want to [et?] dat stuff.

"De Pierce outfit sure em a big outfit. Ther am twice de numbeh of hands as ther whar on de '[?]'. De numbeh of critters em [?] dis nigger can count. 'Das critters all over de country. les sur get plenty of ridin' ther en' I still de bestest hoss Buster wid dat outfit.

"One [?] short spell aftah les come to de outfit dey bands get several snake lood hosses en' am havin' fun tryin' to ride 'em. Ther am ond dat put half dozen of de boys in a spill en' day starts to coax me to ride 'em. De [?] don't know 'bout my ridin' en' dey em fixin' fo' some mo'e fun. Well, les get on de critter en' puts my loop legs 'round it en' den 'twas some fun. les stayed wid de snake till it em tuckered out en' can't pitch no mo'e. Dem



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rawhides sure em 'prised at what dey saw. Aftah dat de hands wher willin' to bet on me ridin' anythin' dat had hair.

“Aftah les leeve de Pierce outfit, les den goes heyah en' ther wranglin' hosses till les [35?] years old, den les quit fo' to go farmin'. Dat les do till de time w'en de stockyards in Fort Worth, den les come heyah en' wo'ked 'round ther till les can't wo'k no mo'e.